



Town of Natick

Fall 2010 Newsletter

*Issued by Martha L. White,
Town Administrator*

Natick Board of Selectmen

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Town of Natick, Massachusetts

13 East Central Street

Natick, Massachusetts

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www.natickma.gov

Fall Town Meeting Preview

The 2010 Fall Annual Town Meeting, which will convene on October 19 at the Wilson Middle School, has a number of interesting proposals for Town Meeting members to debate and decide, including capital budget requests; acquisition of land next to the West Natick Fire Station; creation of a Capital Stabilization Fund; amendments to the Personnel By-Law; amendments to the current year operating budget; several citizen petitions including proposals for by-law changes, adoption of state laws relating to cooperation between general government and school departments, a request for funding of crossing guard positions, and improvements at the Oak Street gravel pit area and at Memorial Field at Natick High School; a proposal to establish a Sex Offender By-Law and several Home Rule petitions including proposals to allow a long-term lease of the East School, to remove the position of Building Commissioner from Civil Service, and to allow a contract greater than 3 years with the Police Chief. The complete Town Meeting warrant can be found at www.natickma.gov or from the Town Clerk's Office.

Police Chief Search Process

The Police Chief Search Committee's work is proceeding well and on schedule. The Board of Selectmen authorized the Committee to retain the firm of BadgeQuest to assist in the search process and conduct an assessment center for semi-finalists. Applications for the position are being accepted through September 22; we expect to draw a large field of highly qualified candidates. Pursuant to the by-law that outlines the hiring process, the Committee will submit the names of 3-5 finalists to the Board of Selectmen by December 3.

Hiring of New Comptroller

We welcomed to the Town this week Karen Kucala as our new Comptroller. Karen comes to us from the Town of Acton, where she served as their Town Accountant and Finance Director for 10 years, having served as Town Accountant for the Town of Shirley for several years before that. We look forward to benefiting from Karen's expertise for many years to come.

Update on the Speen Street Culvert Repair Project

As reported in my last newsletter and through various media outlets, both lanes of Speen Street from West Central Street south beyond the first Roche Bros. driveway will remain closed for about 4 months while repairs are being made to the culvert. This extraordinarily complex project involves the temporary relocation of major utilities and channeling of the flow of water between Fiske Pond and the so-called Settling Pond, as well as the installation of steel pilings to support the replacement culvert. While the state will not be constructing a sidewalk in this location, it is anticipated that adequate width will be provided to allow the Town to install a sidewalk in the future.

High School & Community/Senior Center Projects

At their meeting of September 13 the School Committee voted to support the recommendation of the High School Building Committee to enter into contract with Brait Builders as the General Contractor for the Natick High School. The favorable bidding climate, combined with Natick's AAA bond rating, produced very favorable bid results; Brait Builders bid is approximately \$8 million under budget. Construction should commence in October. Thank you again Natick voters for approving this important project. Visit the project website at www.natickps.org

The Community/Senior Center project has not yet gone out to bid but is scheduled to do so later this fall. The Selectmen have authorized the use of the now-vacant East School for Senior Center operations during the duration of the construction project, enabling the project to be constructed in one phase and shaving 4-6 months off of the construction duration. Visit the project website at www.natickcsc.org.

Upcoming Events

Veterans' Appreciation Dinner

For several years, the Natick Firefighters have hosted a veterans' appreciation dinner. This year, the firefighters will be partnering with the Natick Soldiers' System Center, the Town and the Veterans' Council to honor veterans, active duty personnel and their families at an event on Veterans' Day, November 11. More information will be available in the coming weeks. Many thanks to the Natick Firefighters, personnel at the Systems Center and the others involved in this project for their support of Natick's veterans.

Forum Regarding Proposed Sales Tax Reduction

At the State election on Tuesday, November 2nd, voters will decide on Question 3 whether to reduce the state sales tax to 3% effective January 1, 2011. Since this ballot question has potential implications for Natick's budget, the Board of Selectmen has voted to hold an informational forum so that voters can hear different sides of this question and consider what the impact may be on town services. This forum will be held on Wednesday, October 20th at 7:00 p.m. in the Lebowitz Meeting Room at the Morse Institute Library. The public is encouraged to attend and ask questions, and to watch on Natick Pegasus. Information about this and other ballot questions will be available through the Town web site as the State election approaches.

Dana Farber Mammography Van

The Natick Service Council, along with the Town's Human Services and Council on Aging Department, and Embrace A Family, is pleased to announce that the Dana-Farber Mammography Van will be returning to Natick on October 7 from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Cole Center, 179 Boden Lane. This Mammography van is equipped with the most state-of-the-art digital equipment. The American Cancer Society recommends that all women over the age of 40 have a mammogram every year. We encourage Natick residents to take advantage of this opportunity.

Transportation can be provided by the Human Services and Council on Aging Department by calling 647-6540. Advance registration is required by calling the Service Council at 508-655-1791.

Vietnam Moving Wall

The Vietnam Moving Wall project is coming to town in the summer of 2011. This touring memorial is a half-size replica of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington DC, and has been exhibited in communities all across the US for over twenty years. Thanks to a volunteer committee, the wall is coming to Elm Bank Reservation; dates will be announced early in 2011. Volunteer and donor support is welcome. More information on how to participate in this worthy effort will be available in the coming months.

Volunteers Needed for Trail Work

A very dedicated group of volunteers, led by Pat Conaway, has been working regularly for the past several months on cleanup projects in area waterways, trails and other hidden treasures throughout Natick. Over the next few weeks the group will be working on Coolidge Hill on Tuesdays (park on the shoulder of Jefferson Street) and Natick Town Forest Trail on Wednesdays (park at the Oak Street entrance just before the culvert) from 10:30 to 11:30. For further information contact Pat Conaway at 508-740-9949 or bpconaway@gmail.com. Pat is also the mastermind behind the green cage recycle bins popping up everywhere around the community. Many thanks to Pat and his very dedicated group of volunteers, and to the DPW Highway and Sanitation Division for supporting their efforts.

Natick Days Event

This past weekend – September 11 – the Town held what may have been the best Natick Days event yet. With many fun activities for kids of all ages, information from Town and local service agencies, a farmers' market and all kinds of food, this event offers something for everyone. If you have not attended Natick Days in the past, please do come next year. It is typically held on the second Saturday of September and is a wonderful old-time community event. Many thanks to the Director of Recreation and Parks, Dick Cugini and other departmental staff, the Natick Days Committee, the many other Town departments that helped organize and/or participated in this effort and the many sponsors that helped make the event possible.